



WHAT'S NEW - CENTRAL VALLEY

California Living Museum. From November 28 through December 30, premiering at California Living Museum in Bakersfield is the largest holiday light show west of the Rockies. "Lightasmic" will consist of a 2-million-light extravaganza featuring pink elephants spraying water, frogs climbing trees, and the face of the north wind blowing snow and stars. California Living Museum, a zoo, botanic garden and natural history museum, displays medically disabled or habituated animals native to California. **Public contact:** California Living Museum, 661/872-2256, www.calmzoo.org.

Capay Valley Vision. Producers in the Capay Valley-Esparto Region have a new marketing tool and ally. In partnership with area farmers, ranchers, and artists, Capay Valley Vision (CVV) has developed a label and branding strategy to distinguish products grown and made in the region. The project is being introduced to the public at a series of events this fall, along with a new label promoting, made- or grown-in the "Beautiful Capay Valley" products. At the Capay Valley Almond Festival, February 29, 2004, CVV will be educating consumers that the Capay Valley is the source of the best farm products they'll ever taste. **Public contact:** Capay Valley Vision, Thomas Nelson, 530/796-4160.

Fresno Metropolitan Museum. For the first time objects from the U.S. Department of State's prestigious collection of American art and craft are presented in a nationwide exhibition *Becoming a Nation*, on view now until December 14, 2003. These items were collected and assembled to furnish the Diplomatic Reception Rooms at the U.S. Department of State in order to provide the nation with beautiful and suitable surroundings for the conduct of American diplomacy. With over 120 works including paintings, furniture, silver, porcelain, rugs, mirrors and other decorative objects, the exhibition includes many of the finest examples of the work created by artists and

craftsmen during the earliest years of American history. A unique and fascinating feature of the exhibition are objects owned, used by, or associated with the statesmen and diplomats of early America, including George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, Benjamin Franklin and James Madison. Fresno Metropolitan Museum is the only venue in California displaying this exhibition. **Public contact:** Fresno Metropolitan Museum, 559/441-1444, www.fresnomet.org.

Kern County Museum. The Kern County Museum in Bakersfield presents the first annual *Clocktower Holidays*, a season-long holiday program for families featuring magical displays of trees and wreaths, special events and family workshops. This year's theme, "Joy of Toys," will feature historic toy collections along with trees and wreaths decorated by local designers, artists and children's charity organizations. This new program, on view from November 22, 2003 until January 4, 2004, will include costumed interpreters, carolers and carriage rides during the Holiday Lamplight Tours on December 13. **Public contact:** Kern County Museum, 661/852-5000, www.kcmuseum.org.